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OUR BOSTON LETTER.

DÉBUT OF NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE'S DAUGHTER
—AN ART NOVEL—GOSSIP.

BOSTON, July, 1879.

ONE of the prominent events in our literary and art world here is the début of the surviving daughter of Nathaniel Hawthorne, America's greatest romance writer, as a novelist. Mrs. Rose Hawthorne Lathrop is a fair young matron, wife of George Parsons Lathrop, poet, litterateur, former associate editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*, and now editor of *The Sunday Courier*, and it is in that very respectable and quite literary weekly that the first serious essay of the daughter of the author of "A Scarlet Letter" has made its appearance as a serial, running since the beginning of last April. As the story now nears its close, it is possible to give you some account of its style and substance, although the dénouement is not yet completely developed. Of course it is because Mrs. Lathrop is the daughter of her father that her first story is, "prima facie," interesting. Has the wondrous gift descended? Are we to have more of that strange mood and fancy, of that subtle dissection and sympathetic insight, of that strikingly American and original line of delineation? These were the questions that rose in the mind when the announcement of the novel was first made. The curiosity was lively even with those who have become skeptical and unsympathetic toward the first succeeding generations in the families of great literary lights, remembering Tom Hood's, Dickens's, Thackeray's heirs in literary fame. I am afraid that the event gives the skeptical party more support than those putting faith in heredity. "Miss Dilettant," as the story is called, is full of genius; but it is also full of faults. To begin with, its atmosphere—that of high art—goes far to destroy its chances with the world, of novel-readers who care nothing for the study of tracing Hawthorne characteristics. It soars at the outset into rarefied regions of æsthetics, and much of its most brilliant dialogue must be unintelligible to those who take no part in the controversies between the opposed cults in art. On the other hand, it dives low into melodramatic and sensational plot in a way to disappoint and detach readers prepared to follow it for art's sake. In short, it is crude and ill-balanced, and lacking in reality, and in what corresponds to "composition" in a large work of art; and still it is such in keen insight, in epigrammatic wit, and in touches of surpassing cleverness of characterization as to convey exciting promise of what the young author may be capable of when she shall have learned to judge of proportion and effect. Hence, in spite of its hobbledehoyhood and the hoity-toity extravagance of sentiment and sensibility attributed to its characters at times—the almost inevitable consequence of drawing on a high-fed spiritual and æsthetic consciousness in default of that experience which a young person necessarily lacks—"Miss Dilettant" is a very notable book, and one that your art circles will discuss with peculiar and lively interest. For its "locale" is New York City. Its heroine is the daughter of a bonanza king, and has been brought to New York to be polished, true diamond of richest worth that she is. The author at all events succeeds in giving her the purest and most brilliant rays. We come to know and acknowledge her as an uncut gem of rarest beauty and fineness. Her voice is her peculiar dower for an artistic career, but she falls into a set of painters revolving around "the great L'Etoile," a luminary of rare effulgence whose little system of satellites is drawn to the life. I cannot do better than give the passage at the beginning of the story, introducing the "set," who form a large section of the dramatis personæ, at an evening party at the New York mansion of the bonanza owner:

Signor Dolci was the loudest talker in the room, since he possessed a clear tenor voice, that could send a soft note a long way. He was now expostulating with Mr. Wessgow about the inefficiency of his daughter's singing-teacher. Two artists murmured before the fire; one old and empty as the seed-pods of December, which rattle to the wind, the other in his prime.

When Miss Wessgow first saw the stranger, he who had silently exclaimed her "nom de guerre," he stood at some distance from the others, examining a nucleus of bric-à-brac upon one of the tables. His air was that of a person perfectly at peace and inattentive, yet before any one else was aware of her presence he had turned quickly, caught at his eye-glass, hesitated, come forward slowly, and was in a few moments introduced to her by L'Etoile, the artist, who was still in the enjoyment of his prime, as Mr. Alfred Mantney. The young man (he was a protégé of L'Etoile's) knowing that Miss Wessgow was not used to society,

was surprised to find her unembarrassed, at the same time that she wore a gentle and intellectual expression which gave a singular charm to her vivacity. He met her triumphantly on the score of self-possession, but paid tribute to her sensitiveness, wherein he differed from her completely; a sensitiveness so perceptible that he breathed more slowly while standing beside her. As for himself, he was armed with inscrutability, which was secretly ready to defend him, like a pistol in the pocket. It may be said parenthetically, as there is much to be said about him, that he had already learned the art of meeting the future with rigid good manners instead of blind effusion, and consequently succeeded in avoiding all slight mistakes. This was excellent training for the avoidance of greater ones.

"Mr. L'Etoile tells me you have devoted yourself to art," said Miss Wessgow, looking into Mantney's eyes, which were so searching that she did not look into them again during the whole evening. "Then you are not afraid to have your life measured to a disadvantage?—art is long and life is fleeting."

"But, when I have so great an artist as Mr. L'Etoile for an example—" answered he, with a cool air of setting her right.

"Certainly," she laughed, "the proverb is out of date in this century!" She was foolishly angry at being parried in her first exchange with him, and also at his taking the liberty of leaving his sentence unfinished. Feeling that his eyes were still fixed upon her, she spoke again, restlessly, asking him if he were to be represented at the Academy Exhibition. Mantney replied that he should send four pictures.

"And I may know them by your having Mr. L'Etoile for an example?" she half-whispered, with a quick, mischievous smile. Her conversation had the rapidity and fickleness of a novice, and she went on soberly: "Will you believe it? I admire his pictures, but I am far from understanding them." She made this confession with an air of wonder.

"You do not find it provoking to be obliged to admire what you can't understand?" he asked. He felt that extreme calmness was necessary in order to keep her from floating away like smoke. But he was in the habit of luring others to positions that required a power of balance, and did not omit to test Miss Wessgow by the same process. Her answer was given with a quiet joy in her expression:

"I am never happier than when I am in this dilemma." But she added with a sudden change to mirth again: "Could the world hold us if we were sufficiently magnified to comprehend it?"

Her guest laughed, with a sort of good-natured disagreeableness that perplexed her.

"What, you would sow this mysterious world with amateurs!" said he. "In regard to my pictures, you will probably understand them and despise them."

The young lady was silent a moment, touching her chin with her forefinger, self-forgetfully. "But you believe in them yourself?" she anxiously inquired. Then as if, on second thoughts, not caring about the matter at all, she added saucily: "Even modest people, should they rise in the world, must be arrogant—when nobody is looking." She half-turned away to speak to the elder artists, and found them engaged in discussing a peculiar book-cover. However, as she saw that an old lady was entering the room, she exclaimed: "Ah, here is my grandmother, Mrs. Edmont. Let me introduce you to her." She looked back at Mantney with a smile, the wickedest interpretation of which was that she intended to leave him with the venerable lady, as proved the case.

A brilliant debate ensues with L'Etoile, who champions "pure art," and with old Mr. Willow, who stands out for the "intelligible" in art, Miss Wessgow wittily mocking at either in turn. I should like to give an excerpt or two from the gay scenes in the studio of L'Etoile, whither Miss Wessgow subsequently goes to become the subject of one of his greatest paintings, and to take lessons in drawing from Mantney. The painting for which Miss Wessgow poses brings its purchaser, a young man of great wealth, to her feet, and the lessons bring Mantney to the same shrine. In this contest for the wild but true young girl, art of course carries the day against gold, notwithstanding that her father is, in the natural every-day processes of Wall Street, meanwhile brought to ruin. Among the ladylike pursuits in which she engages as part of her social development is charity visiting under high church auspices, the satirizing of which is delicately but powerfully accomplished by the way. In her visits to the homes of the poor, she discovers that the tenor Dolci, who is paying her fierce Italian court, is married, and, moreover, that the poor neglected Italian wife and mother, whose children earn a pittance as models in Mantney's studio, is her father's sister. The revelation of her father's origin comes in time to prepare her for a dark plot of his to marry her to Dolci, who has him in his power, and a midnight abduction by means of a yacht approaching Wessgow's summer residence is the impending catastrophe, which of course it is incumbent on the manly Mantney to parry, awaiting us in the next and concluding chapter.

The artists are for the most part out of town, in the mountains or at the sea-side. Vinton remains at work on a portrait of Charles Francis Adams, which will be a match for his brilliant achievement with Thomas G. Appleton. The absence of the great world also has prevented any special point being made with the re-

opening of the Museum of Fine Arts. The display of Gobelin tapestry there, however, is something of which the like was never seen here, at all events, for splendor and richness, and the casts of recent discoveries at Olympia, including the famed *Hermès*, for which the claim is made that it is the most perfect antique yet recovered, not excepting the Vatican treasures, are worth a journey hither to see.

GRETA.

A DAY IN THE CORCORAN GALLERY.

WASHINGTON, July, 1879.

IF we have an art school in Washington at all, it is the Corcoran Gallery on a "pay-day." On three days in the week, by the imposition of a small entrance fee, in order that artists may have more room and quiet in which to study and copy the pictures, the public are somewhat discouraged from visiting the gallery. All facilities in the way of easels and stools for copying are furnished on application to the obliging curator, and a number of art students and amateurs avail themselves of this opportunity for study. The professional artists of the city are generous in their suggestion and instruction to art students. Mr. E. F. Andrews is always at the gallery on copying days, and gives much time and help gratuitously.

There are fewer visitors on these days, and those who do pass through the rooms seem to be of the quiet, appreciative sort, who look at pictures as though they owed them. As a rule, we Americans go through a picture gallery as we would through a bowling alley. The average young man is unconscious of any beauty in a picture so subtle that it cannot be pointed out with a riding whip, and "St. Agnes Before the Roman Tribunal" is not safe from the bayonet charge of American umbrellas.

In the main room this morning were nine artists with their easels, each encamped before the picture he was studying. That does not mean that this is a masculine monopoly. On the contrary, the women predominate. Here is a young lady—a blonde in a gray flannel blouse—perched on a high stool, in front of Bega's "Child and Nurse." She is coaxing out the soft flesh tints of the child, who is a delicious bit of Anglo-Saxon pink and white. She has not begun yet on the swarthy nurse, who looks like an Indian ayah. Out in the room, at long range from the picture on the wall, is a copy of the "Talking Well," which is being done by Mr. Siebert, one of our professional artists, one of the youngest of them; a student of the Weimar school. It is only begun. The girl and the well are indicated; and the lover in uniform, leaning down over the wall, is nothing as yet but incoherent dashes of crimson; but he whole is done with such spirit and vigor and force that the picture has something to say for itself from the beginning. It reminds one of life class work.

There is a votary in front of that warm, luxurious picture of the "Vestal Tuccia." Miss Hartwell, who is one of our most promising amateurs, is doing this. That wonderful figure in the foreground, with its uplifted arm against the warm pallor of the eastern sky, with the robe that falls in graceful lines down from shapely head to sandaled feet—that is the sort of dress we shall be wearing presently when the Greek revolutionists have their way, and the Greek dress-makers come in. Those simple, unbroken lines give dignity and height—we shall all be daughters of the gods, divinely tall, if not divinely fair, when the new régime comes in.

"Fun and Fright" is being taken away. Bierstadt's "Mt. Corcoran" is being built up anew on canvas, with its "visions of silver palaces around the horizon," and all the cloud-glory that overshadows mountains.

A favorite plan with our art students is to take out from some large, densely populated picture a single figure or a small group, and make a small genre picture. From this "Fête of St. John in Sweden," by Salmson, a lady is abducting a group of three people, a baby being the head and front of the offending.

Some one is copying Whittredge's "Trout Brook in the Catskills." "Church's Niagara" is going on a scrap of canvas—so small by contrast that it is as though one looked through the telescope the wrong way. And—this goes without saying—some one is painting a Charlotte Corday. Somebody is always painting Charlotte Corday. No artist's heart can withstand the wistful appeal of that face to be taken out from behind those prison bars. Not a little of the wonderful pathos of the picture lies in the bare, blue-veined wrist, from

which the open sleeve falls back. And she holds her pen like a short-hand reporter. In the copy that Miss Bailey is making, the figure is quite finished, but only two of the upper bars of the grating are painted in. Below them is a great open space, quite large enough for a woman of her size to creep through. It is a good chance for Charlotte to escape.

In the same little side-room where the "Bega" is, Mr. Morgan, one of the "professionals," is copying Von Thoren's "Lost Dogs." They stand shivering in the unfinished snow, while the artist paints that "evening-red" in the sky that, although warm in color, gives you no feeling of warmth. It is one of the most truthful skies ever put into a picture.

Hart's "Drove at the Ford" is going on canvas—only dead-colored so far, and therefore a chaos of color. The lovely lady in the costume of Louis XI., by Compté, "At Fontainebleau," is being copied also. She, too, is only dead-colored. There is always something grotesque about a face or figure in the first stages of painting. This lovely lady of Compté's comes down the walk in a shimmering silk of faded amethyst, with a cluster of marguerites in her dainty hand, and on her head a high-pointed cap, like the one Genevieve Ward wears in "Jane Shore." And so will the lady in the copy, when Miss Bradley has done with her, but just now she is only a yellow dress, and a red cap, ghastly and gaudy.

In the same little side-room where the "Bega" is, Miss Rockwell is copying "Corn and Grapes," not your plump, commonplace grapes, but difficult grapes, that have been shriveled by a frost—a killing frost. She is getting the crisp feeling of the corn husks, and I am glad she has found a red ear of corn; it is such good luck. Five easels in this side-room; five women, working intently, and scarcely talking at all.

In the little room where the "Greek Slave" stands, inside a brass railing, a young student, Mr. Janus, is copying "A Bacchante" in crayon.

This is the room for the ceiling of which Brumidi has designed frescos. He showed them to me up at his studio the other evening, explaining that there was as yet, unfortunately, no fresco painting at the Corcoran Gallery, and that if these designs should be placed there, all kinds of art work would then be represented. You know Brumidi? He is the old Italian artist who works away up under the day-lighted dome at the Capitol. Down in the antique room on the first floor I find half a dozen students at work copying marble men and women. It is shivering cold. Marble gives me a chill. Besides, I am afraid of statues. They are not dead. They are only very quiet, with a watchful, sleepless life that bides its time. I go back presently, just for warmth of color, to the "Vestal Tuccia," and creeping up close to that gray wall, all covered with sunshine and Latin inscriptions, I am happy.

But talking of statues reminds me of a new woman-sculptor that we have here, whose work is attracting much attention. I think Mrs. Ketcham may be called one of the children of the Centennial. Living all her life in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, she had seen little of art-work, and had no training whatever.

That centennial summer, with its revelation of art-treasures, crystalized what had always been a strong impulse into a definite resolve to study. She went to New York, but found it difficult, in midsummer, to get any instruction, or even suggestion, as to how to go to work. But finally she spent a few weeks in the studio of Wilson McDonald, and from him I think she must have obtained both, and a good start in the right direction, for she went back to Iowa, and worked on alone with success. In November last she came to Washington, and worked all winter in her quiet little studio on E Street, filling commissions, to the entire satisfaction of her patrons. She works with enthusiasm and spirit, and is winning her way here. She is now doing a bust of Senator Allison of Iowa, and has just sent out one of Chief Justice Miller, in his robes of office, which is an excellent portrait. I saw also a bust of George Q. Cannon of Utah, of Judge MacArthur of this city, and a number of others.

Among our most promising amateurs whom I find working at the Gallery are Mr. Janus, who was copying the Bacchante; Miss Plympton, doing a "Paul Weber;" Miss Dougal, working from the antique; Miss Hartwell; Miss Morehead; Miss Rockwell, who is doing the "Corn and Grapes," and who has a very true feeling of color.

This is something of what goes on at the Corcoran Gallery on a "pay-day," and it would be difficult to

estimate, and impossible to over-estimate, the good service done in the cause of art by the man who establishes such a gallery and offers such facilities for study. . . .

Later.—I have come up to the Gallery again to take notes of the latest purchase which has been added to the collection. Fifteen portraits of the Presidents, beginning with Washington and ending with Lincoln, have lately been purchased from S. B. Bryan, of Highland Place. Harrison, Johnson, and Grant are the missing links, and they will soon be supplied. These are all by Healy, some of them, of course, being after earlier artists. Uniform in size, with dark backgrounds and narrow, tarnished gilt frames, they hang in a long straight line down the side room of the Gallery. Notice how the stately English look dies out, and the distinctive American look comes into the faces. Full wigs of snow-white hair, puffed and powdered like any girl of the period, give way to straight, scanty locks of nature's own providing; stately ruffs are superseded first by the pillory of the black silk stock, and then by standing or turn-down collars. The line begins with Washington. No, it does *not* begin with Washington, "Place aux dames." It begins with Martha Washington, "after Stuart"—calm, pink and white, and placid. Then the General. John Adams, a calm, strong, dignified face. Jefferson, with his hair parted in the middle. Madison, "after Harding," with a cascade of white ruff tucked away under his determined chin and firm lower lip. Monroe, with a whole era of good feeling in the dimple in his chin. He is the only one of all the illustrious crowd who has a dimple. Van Buren narrowly escaped one, but there are no dimples about General Jackson, whose face is full of sharply-drawn lines.

CALISTA HALSEY.

ART IN ST. LOUIS.

ST. LOUIS, July, 1879.

SOMETHING of a confusion of ideas regarding the art schools of St. Louis has resulted from there being two schools here, which, though differing entirely in their aims and methods, are apt to become blended in the occasional references of press notices.

The Art Department of St. Louis is a department in Washington University. The principal is Professor Halsey C. Ives, assisted by the artist, Mr. Carl Guthertz; the sculptor, Howard Kretschmar, and by advanced art students, Messrs. Fry, Muns and Raeder. This Art Department teaches a knowledge of the laws governing the harmonious arrangement of form and color, as applied to working in the higher forms of art, or as applied to the productions of art and industrial manufacture. The course of instruction in drawing is on one of the most complete and beautiful of systems. Professor Ives has made a careful, personal observation of the art schools of Europe, and selected from each the methods best adapted to the proper training of the eye and hand. In this department every important art work in Europe is represented by cast, autotype or engraving. There have been this year eighty students attending the evening classes on Tuesday and Saturday evenings, working from model and object, from the antique and from the draped figure. In the life class, composed only of artists and advanced students, twenty-four have worked on Monday and Friday evenings, drawing from the nude figure. Lectures on artistic anatomy have been given every Friday evening. No decorative art work was connected with the Art Department, although wood carving was taught in a room in the University. This was the only branch of decorative work admitted.

The St. Louis School of Design, lately closed, was devoted to decorative art. Classes were instructed in carving, Kensington work and porcelain painting, also in modeling, but no attempt at high art was made. A cause of failure may be found in not having given to drawing that prominence it requires as the foundation of all true work, whether in decorative or high art. This school was established five years ago under what seemed to be favorable auspices. The recent Loan Exhibition, held at the Mary Institute, in this city, was for the benefit of the School of Design, and realized a gross receipt of \$2448.65. The expenses were \$1400, leaving as net proceeds \$1048.65. Of this \$500 was appropriated to meet an old debt, and there is now a balance on hand of \$548.65, that will be credited to the fund of the Woman's Exchange. The Woman's Exchange will reopen in September. It is conducted on

the New York plan, as set forth in THE ART AMATEUR last month. It was established primarily as a sales-room for the work of the pupils of the School of Design; but, at the solicitation of others, it was opened to all women for sales of work.

L. W.

SUMMER HAUNTS OF ARTISTS.

AMONG the artists encamped in the Adirondacks this summer are Mr. Wyant, who goes up and down among the mountains and returns occasionally to New York, choosing not to spend the full season in any particular spot, and Mr. Tait, who fixes his abode at Long Lake from July until November, yet finds the summer rather short. This location in Hamilton county, only a hundred miles west from Saratoga, forms a contrast to the fashionable resort as great as any artist could dream of. Fifty miles by railway from Saratoga, and another fifty by wagon—a glorious ride this latter one—and the tourist arrives at Long Lake, where Mr. Tait has built his summer home, a cottage embodying the artistic fancies of its owner. The isolation of the place is to be imagined from the fact that a party may travel thence seventy-five miles north, south or west through the forest without crossing any road. The tourist has need to keep himself in health here for there are no doctors; at peace with his fellow men for there are no lawyers; and strongly shod, where the shoemaker is unknown in all the length and breadth of that region round about.

In the difficulty of determining where to go, an unusual number of artists this year decided on several places, as is not a new course with some, although few have studios variously located, as Mr. La Farge always has in New York, Boston and Newport. On such a plan Mr. William Hart wanders about the country wherever thoroughbred herds invite him, or where there is some coveted charm of landscape. In about the same spirit Mr. S. R. Gifford pursues his artistic travels after a two week's fishing excursion in Canada, early in July, the probabilities being that his present location is Placid Lake, in Essex county, of this State. Mr. Shuttleff divides the months between the Berkshire hills, Moosehead Lake, and some of the Maine rivers. During the month of July Mr. Wilmarth was at the Delaware Water Gap, returning to New York some time in the present month, when the peach season is at its height, in order to paint that fruit in the many beautiful varieties always reaching this market. Mr. J. G. Brown—whose success of the past year it is a pleasure to understand increases his income by some thousands of dollars above what it has been in previous years—went first to South Hampton, L. I., and thence eastward. He expected to be joined at Boston by his pupil, Gilbert Gaul, the new associate of the Academy, who on leaving the city went for a few weeks to New Albany before proceeding to the appointed starting-place for the tour with the older artist. Mr. Homer Martin went to Canada, and concludes the season at Newport. Of Mr. Winslow Homer's movements in summer-time no person however intimate is ever supposed to have the secret, and the present season is not made an exception.

Of those who content themselves in familiar places are Mr. McEntee, passing the season at Rondout, and Mr. Nicoll at Shrub Oak. Probably Mr. Whittredge also will finish the summer months in the place he has recently built at Summit, New Jersey. Mr. Coleman is at East Hampton, L. I. Mr. James D. Smillie makes a long summer at Poughkeepsie, remaining until November, and Mr. R. Swain Gifford went again this year to New Bedford, after returning from the Tile Club excursion.

Comparatively few artists have left America this present season. Mr. J. G. Chapman set out on his return to Rome on the fourth of June, and Mr. Robert Minor has probably reached England ere this, it being some time since we were bidding him "bon voyage," in view of his departure.

Our marine painters are mostly dotted along the nearer coasts, as H. M. F. de Haas at South Hampton, and Mr. Bricher at Manchester-by-the-sea. The latter charming resort is somewhat inaccessible to artists, being quite taken up by private residents owning beautiful villas, if we except the Booth Hotel, known as the Masconomo. Here also are the country houses of John Gilbert, Mrs. Bowers, and others of the dramatic profession. The owners have sought to keep the